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DEPT FOR OES/OA Q JOHN FIELD AND EUR/WE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EFIS](#) [KSCA](#) [PREL](#) [IWC](#) [ETRD](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: WHALES - ITALIAN RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON USG IWC  
ANNUAL MEETING PRIORITIES

REF: STATE 056397 (NOTAL)

¶1. Per instructions in reftel, on May 4, ESTH Counselor contacted Italian IWC Commissioner Giuseppe Ambrosio to convey points on U.S. priorities in advance of the 2007 Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission. We also sent points to Deputy IWC Commissioner Dr. Aldo Cosentino, Director General and Head of the Nature Protection Service at the Ministry of the Environment. We had been informed that Dr. Cosentino planned to attend the meeting; however, we learned on May 24 that he will not travel to Alaska.

¶2. On May 24 we received a reply, translated below, from Commissioner Ambrosio of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests.

BEGIN INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION

¶3. BOWHEAD WHALE QUOTA: Italy, as usual, will not oppose the "aboriginal subsistence whaling" quota and will do everything possible to bring about its approval.

¶4. JAPAN'S PROPOSAL FOR SMALL-TYPE COASTAL WHALING (STCW): Italy has always opposed this quota (around 50 juvenile finback/razorbacks for the four Japanese coastal communities) and maintains that coastal fishing cannot be equated with aboriginal whaling. Moreover, the opening of a new hunting quota is a threat against the moratorium itself.

¶5. REVISED MANAGEMENT SCHEME (RMS): Italy maintains that drafting a well-designed RMS is necessary (better a functioning hypothesis of an RMS than no hypothesis) and regrets that the process was interrupted, in fact making the Commission dysfunctional. However, given the current stalled situation, the only possible solution would be to have a group of international legal experts, possibly an autonomous panel, draw up the "management scheme", which then could be discussed first in the RMS Committee, and then at the Plenary.

¶6. CONSERVATION COMMITTEE: We maintain that the CC should be concerned with alleviable environmental emergencies (for example, collisions, or exceptional instances of pollution, and bycatch) or with species and/or populations that are dangerously headed for extinction, as is the case with the Franck whale in the north Atlantic and the gray whale in the northwest Pacific.  
END INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION.

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